

# USFS COEUR D'ALENE NURSERY (PWS 1280212) SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT REPORT

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## State of Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

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## Executive Summary

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, all states are required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to assess every source of public drinking water for its relative sensitivity to contaminants regulated by the act. This assessment is based on a land use inventory of the designated assessment area, sensitivity factors associated with the wells, and aquifer characteristics.

This report, *Source Water Assessment for USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery*, describes the public drinking water system, the boundaries of the zones of water contribution, and the associated potential contaminant sources located within these boundaries. This assessment should be used as a planning tool, taken into account with local knowledge and concerns, to develop and implement appropriate protection measures for this source. **The results should not be used as an absolute measure of risk and they should not be used to undermine public confidence in the water system.**

The USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery drinking water system consists of one well. The well has an excellent bacteriological monitoring history with zero water samples positive for total coliform bacteria since at least 1992. Several water samples have tested positive for the synthetic organic chemical, dachtal, used as an herbicide. The EPA has set the lifetime exposure rate for dachtal at 3,500ppb. A sample in August of 1993 revealed dachtal in the well at a level of 392.7Fg/L. Water samples taken in October of 1994 showed decreased levels of dachtal at 15.8Fg/L and .13Fg/L. Water samples have been negative for dachtal since that time. A water sample taken in 1982 revealed the well's Cadmium level to be .1Fg/L, above the Maximum Contaminant Level for Cadmium which is .005Fg/L. Further sampling has proven that the presence of Cadmium in the well has decreased to acceptable levels.

This assessment should be used as a basis for determining appropriate new protection measures or re-evaluating existing protection efforts. No matter what ranking a source receives, protection is always important. Whether the source is currently located in a "pristine" area or an area with numerous industrial and/or agricultural land uses that require education and surveillance, the way to ensure good water quality in the future is to act now to protect valuable water supply resources.

The USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery should focus source water protection activities on implementation of practices aimed at reducing the leaching of chemicals used to aid the growth of trees on shrubs on nursery-owned land within the designated source water area. Similar efforts should be made towards reducing chemical leaching on the golf course located to the south of the nursery. Most of the designated area is not owned by the USFS. Therefore, partnerships with state and local agencies and industry groups should be established and are critical to success. Due to the time involved with the movement of ground water, source water protection activities should be aimed at long-term management strategies even though these strategies may not yield results in the near term.

A community with a fully developed source water protection program will incorporate many strategies. For assistance in developing protection strategies, please contact your regional Idaho Department of Environmental Quality office or the Idaho Rural Water Association.

# SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT FOR USFS COEUR D'ALENE NURSERY

## Section 1. Introduction- Basis for Assessment

The following sections contain information necessary to understand how and why this assessment was conducted. **It is important to review this information to understand what the ranking of this source means.** A map showing the delineated source water assessment area and the inventory of significant potential sources of contamination identified within that area are attached.

### Level of Accuracy and Purpose of the Assessment

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assess the over 2,900 public drinking water sources in Idaho for their relative susceptibility to contaminants regulated by the Safe Drinking Water Act. This assessment is based on a land use inventory of the delineated assessment area, sensitivity factors associated with the wells, and aquifer characteristics. All assessments must be completed by May of 2003. The resources and time available to accomplish assessments are limited. Therefore, an in-depth, site-specific investigation to identify each significant potential source of contamination for every public water system is not possible. **This assessment should be used as a planning tool, taken into account with local knowledge and concerns, to develop and implement appropriate protection measures for this source. The results should not be used as an absolute measure of risk and they should not be used to undermine public confidence in the water system.**

The ultimate goal of this assessment is to provide data to local communities to develop a protection strategy for their drinking water supply system. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) recognizes that pollution prevention activities generally require less time and money to implement than treating a public water supply system once it has been contaminated. DEQ encourages communities to balance resource protection with economic growth and development. The decision as to the amount and types of information necessary to develop a source water protection program should be determined by the local community based on its own needs and limitations. Wellhead or source water protection is one facet of a comprehensive growth plan, and it can complement ongoing local planning efforts.

## **Section 2. Conducting the Assessment**

### **General Description of the Source Water Quality**

USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery serves a population of approximately 40 people. The nursery is located in Coeur d'Alene south of the intersection of Atlas and Forest Service Nursery Roads (Figure 1). The public drinking water system for the USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery is comprised of one well.

The well is currently not facing significant water quality issues, but does have a history of water samples positive for both synthetic organic chemicals and inorganic chemicals

### **Defining the Zones of Contribution- Delineation**

The delineation process establishes the physical area around a well that will become the focal point of the assessment. The process includes mapping the boundaries of the zone of contribution into time of travel zones (zones indicating the number of years necessary for a particle of water to reach a well) for water in the aquifer. DEQ used a refined computer model approved by the EPA in determining the three-year (Zone 1B), six-year (Zone 2), and ten-year (Zone 3) times-of-travel (TOT) for water associated with the Rathdrum Prairie aquifer in the vicinity of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The computer model used site specific data, assimilated by DEQ from a variety of sources including the city and other local well logs. The delineated source water assessment area for the USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery can best be described as a long, narrow capture zone that begins at the well and extends in a southeasterly direction for approximately 3 miles. The actual data used by DEQ in determining the source water assessment delineation area are available upon request.

### **Identifying Potential Sources of Contamination**

A potential source of contamination is defined as any facility or activity that stores, uses, or produces, as a product or by-product, the contaminants regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act and has a sufficient likelihood of releasing such contaminants at levels that could pose a concern relative to drinking water sources. The goal of the inventory process is to locate and describe those facilities, land uses, and environmental conditions that are potential sources of ground water contamination. The locations of potential sources of contamination within the delineation area were obtained by field surveys conducted by DEQ and from available databases.

The dominant land use in the area surrounding the USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery is residential, with the nursery-owned property itself consisting primarily of agricultural-type land.

It is important to understand that a release may never occur from a potential source of contamination provided best management practices are used at the facility. Many potential sources of contamination are regulated at the federal level, state level, or both to reduce the risk of release. Therefore, when a business, facility, or property is identified as a potential contaminant source, this should not be interpreted to mean that this business, facility, or property is in violation of any local, state, or federal environmental law or regulation. What it does mean is that the potential for contamination exists due to the nature of the business, industry, or operation. There are a number of methods that water systems can use to work cooperatively with potential sources of contamination, such as educational visits and inspections of stored materials. Many owners of such facilities may not even be aware that they are located near a public water supply well.

### Contaminant Source Inventory Process

A two-phased contaminant inventory of the study area was conducted during February and March of 2001. The first phase involved identifying and documenting potential contaminant sources within the USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery source water assessment area through the use of computer databases and Geographic Information System maps developed by DEQ. The second, or enhanced, phase of the contaminant inventory involved contacting the operator to validate the sources identified in phase one and to add any additional potential sources in the area. This voluntary task was not completed by the USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery.

A total of 7 potential contaminant sites are located within the delineated source water area (Table 1). Most of the potential contaminant sources within delineated source water area are located within the 6 year time of travel zone. Table 1 lists the potential contaminants of concern, time of travel zones, and information source.

**Table 1. USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery Potential Contaminant Inventory**

SITE #	Source Description <sup>1</sup>	TOT Zone <sup>2</sup> (years)	Source of Information	Potential Contaminants <sup>3</sup>
1	Boat Dealer	6	Database Search	VOC, SOC
2	Filtered Drainfield and Holding Tank	6	Database Search	IOC, Microbial
3	Transportation Corridor	6	Database Search	VOC, SOC, IOC
4	Golf Course	3 and 6	Database Search	IOC, SOC
5	Boat Service and Repair	6	Database Search	VOC, SOC
6	Boat Service and Repair	6	Database Search	VOC, SOC
7	AST	6	Database Search	VOC, SOC

<sup>1</sup> AST = above ground storage tank

<sup>2</sup> TOT = time of travel (in years) for a potential contaminant to reach the wellhead

<sup>3</sup> IOC = inorganic chemical, VOC = volatile organic chemical, SOC = synthetic organic chemical

# USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery Delineation Location and Potential Contaminant Inventory



### **Section 3. Susceptibility Analysis**

The susceptibility of the source to contamination was ranked as high, moderate, or low risk according to the following considerations: hydrologic characteristics, physical integrity of the well, land use characteristics, and potentially significant contaminant sources. The susceptibility rankings are specific to a particular potential contaminant or category of contaminants. Therefore, a high susceptibility rating relative to one potential contaminant does not mean that the water system is at the same risk for all other potential contaminants. The relative ranking that is derived for each well is a qualitative, screening-level step that, in many cases, uses generalized assumptions and best professional judgement. The following summaries describe the rationale for the susceptibility ranking.

#### **Hydrologic Sensitivity**

The well's hydrologic sensitivity was determined to be high. This reflects the relatively shallow nature of the ground water system, porous soils in the surrounding area, and the lack of significant confining layers retarding the vertical transport of contaminants.

#### **Well Construction**

Well construction directly affects the ability of the wells to protect the aquifer from contaminants. Lower scores imply a system that can better protect the water. The USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery drinking water system consists of one well that extracts ground water for domestic use. Water extraction is monitored by the system operator. The well's system construction score was moderate. This is due in part to the age of the well, which makes it unlikely that the well meets today's construction standards. The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) *Well Construction Standards Rules (1993)* require all public water systems (PWSs) follow DEQ standards as well. IDAPA 58.01.08.550 requires that PWSs follow the *Recommended Standards for Water Works (1997)* during construction. Various aspects of the standards can be assessed from well logs. The USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery well PWS file does not contain a standard well driller's log. This lack of complete information also contributed to the well's moderate system construction score.

#### **Potential Contaminant Source and Land Use**

The well rated in the moderate category for volatile organic chemicals and in the low category for microbial contaminants. It was automatically assigned high potential contaminant/land use scores in the synthetic organic and inorganic categories because these types of chemicals were detected in well water upon routine sampling. Cadmium was detected at a level above the maximum contaminant level in 1982. This has since resolved. The herbicide, dachtal, a synthetic organic chemical was detected in water samples on three occasions. This contamination has also since resolved.

#### **Final Susceptibility Ranking**

In terms of the total susceptibility score, it can be seen from Table 2 that the well ranked moderately susceptible overall in the volatile organic chemical and microbial categories. As stated above, the well ranked high in the inorganic chemical and synthetic organic chemical categories because of historic water samples positive for these types of chemicals.



**Table 2. Summary of USFS Coeur d’Alene Nursery Susceptibility Evaluation**

Well	Susceptibility Scores <sup>1</sup>									
	Hydrologic Sensitivity	Contaminant Inventory				System Construction	Final Susceptibility Ranking			
		IOC	VOC	SOC	Microbials		IOC	VOC	SOC	Microbials
1	H	H*	M	H*	M	M	H*	M	H*	M

<sup>1</sup>H = High Susceptibility, M = Moderate Susceptibility, Low Susceptibility

IOC = inorganic chemical, VOC = volatile organic chemical, SOC = synthetic organic chemical

<sup>2</sup>H\* - Indicates source automatically scored as high susceptibility due to presence of either a VOC or SOC, or an IOC above the maximum contaminant level, in the tested drinking water

### Susceptibility Summary

The USFS Coeur d’Alene Nursery drinking water system is currently not threatened by significant levels of contamination, but system operators should be aware of the well’s susceptibility to IOC and SOC contamination and remain diligent in regards to water sampling.

## Section 4. Options for Source Water Protection

The susceptibility assessment should be used as a basis for determining appropriate new protection measures or re-evaluating existing protection efforts. No matter what the susceptibility ranking a source receives, protection is always important. Whether the source is currently located in a “pristine” area or an area with numerous industrial and/or agricultural land uses that require education and surveillance, the way to ensure good water quality in the future is to act now to protect valuable water supply resources.

An effective source water protection program is tailored to the particular local source water protection area. A system with a fully-developed source water protection program will incorporate many strategies. The USFS Coeur d’Alene Nursery should focus source water protection activities on implementation of practices aimed at reducing the leaching of herbicides and fertilizers from nursery-owned land within the delineated source water area. The nursery should also attempt to notify the owners of the golf course located to the south of the drinking water well of the presence of a public drinking water system recharge zone in their area. Both businesses should take steps to minimize the use of chemicals within the source water assessment area. As part of a comprehensive source water assessment plan, the nursery should develop a contingency plan that outlines emergency response activities and identifies an alternative source of drinking water. Due to the time involved with the movement of ground water, wellhead protection activities should be aimed at long-term management strategies even though these strategies may not yield results in the near term.



## **Assistance**

Public water supplies and others may call the following IDEQ offices with questions about this assessment and to request assistance with developing and implementing a local protection plan. In addition, draft protection plans may be submitted to the IDEQ office for preliminary review and comments.

Coeur d'Alene Regional IDEQ Office (208) 769-1422

State IDEQ Office (208) 373-0502

Website: <http://www.deq.state.id.us>

Water suppliers serving fewer than 10,000 persons may contact John Bokor, Idaho Rural Water Association, at 1-800-962-3257 for assistance with wellhead protection strategies.

## References Cited

Great Lakes-Upper Mississippi River Board of State and Provincial Public Health and Environmental Managers, 1997. "Recommended Standards for Water Works."

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, 1997. Design Standards for Public Drinking Water Systems. IDAPA 58.01.08.550.01.

Idaho Department of Water Resources, 1993. Administrative Rules of the Idaho Water Resource Board: Well Construction Standards Rules. IDAPA 37.03.09.

## Attachment A

# USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery Susceptibility Analysis Worksheets

The final scores for the susceptibility analysis were determined using the following formulas:

- 1) VOC/SOC/IOC Final Score = Hydrologic Sensitivity + System Construction + (Potential Contaminant/Land Use x 0.27)
- 2) 2) Microbial Final Score = Hydrologic Sensitivity + System Construction + (Potential Contaminant/Land Use x 0.35)

Final Susceptibility Scoring:

- 0 - 5 Low Susceptibility
- 6 - 12 Moderate Susceptibility
- > 13 High Susceptibility

## 1. System Construction

SCORE

Drill Date	1962	
Driller Log Available	YES	
Sanitary Survey (if yes, indicate date of last survey)	YES	1999
Well meets IDWR construction standards	NO	1
Wellhead and surface seal maintained	YES	0
Casing and annular seal extend to low permeability unit	NO	2
Highest production 100 feet below static water level	NO	1
Well located outside the 100 year flood plain	YES	0

Total System Construction Score 4

## 2. Hydrologic Sensitivity

Soils are poorly to moderately drained	NO	2
Vadose zone composed of gravel, fractured rock or unknown	YES	1
Depth to first water > 300 feet	NO	1
Aquitard present with > 50 feet cumulative thickness	NO	2

Total Hydrologic Score 6

## 3. Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE 1A

IOC Score VOC Score SOC Score Microbial Score

Land Use Zone 1A	RANGELAND, WOODLAND, BASALT	0	0	0	0
Farm chemical use high	NO	0	0	0	
IOC, VOC, SOC, or Microbial sources in Zone 1A	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO

Total Potential Contaminant Source/Land Use Score - Zone 1A 0 0 0 0

## Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE 1B

Contaminant sources present (Number of Sources)	YES	1	0	1	0
(Score = # Sources X 2 ) 8 Points Maximum		2	0	2	0
Sources of Class II or III leachable contaminants or	YES	1	0	1	
4 Points Maximum		1	0	1	
Zone 1B contains or intercepts a Group 1 Area	NO	0	0	0	0
Land use Zone 1B	Less Than 25% Agricultural Land	0	0	0	0

Total Potential Contaminant Source / Land Use Score - Zone 1B 3 0 3 0

## Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE II

Contaminant Sources Present	YES	2	2	2	
Sources of Class II or III leachable contaminants or	YES	1	1	1	
Land Use Zone II	25 to 50% Irrigated Agricultural Land	1	1	1	

Potential Contaminant Source / Land Use Score - Zone II 4 4 4 0

## Potential Contaminant / Land Use - ZONE III

Contaminant Source Present	NO	0	0	0	
Sources of Class II or III leachable contaminants or	NO	0	0	0	
Is there irrigated agricultural lands that occupy > 50% of	NO	0	0	0	

Total Potential Contaminant Source / Land Use Score - Zone III 0 0 0 0

## Cumulative Potential Contaminant / Land Use Score

7 4 7 0

## 4. Final Susceptibility Source Score

11 11 11 10

## 5. Final Well Ranking

High Moderate High Moderate

# POTENTIAL CONTAMINANT INVENTORY

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

**AST (Aboveground Storage Tanks)** – Sites with aboveground storage tanks.

**Business Mailing List** – This list contains potential contaminant sites identified through a yellow pages database search of standard industry codes (SIC).

**CERCLIS** – This includes sites considered for listing under the **Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)**. CERCLA, more commonly known as **ASuperfund** is designed to clean up hazardous waste sites that are on the national priority list (NPL).

**Cyanide Site** – DEQ permitted and known historical sites/facilities using cyanide.

**Dairy** – Sites included in the primary contaminant source inventory represent those facilities regulated by Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and may range from a few head to several thousand head of milking cows.

**Deep Injection Well** – Injection wells regulated under the Idaho Department of Water Resources generally for the disposal of stormwater runoff or agricultural field drainage.

**Enhanced Inventory** – Enhanced inventory locations are potential contaminant source sites added by the water system. These can include new sites not captured during the primary contaminant inventory, or corrected locations for sites not properly located during the primary contaminant inventory. Enhanced inventory sites can also include miscellaneous sites added by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) during the primary contaminant inventory.

**Floodplain** – This is a coverage of the 100year floodplains.

**Group 1 Sites** – These are sites that show elevated levels of contaminants and are not within the priority one areas.

**Inorganic Priority Area** – Priority one areas where greater than 25% of the wells/springs show constituents higher than primary standards or other health standards.

**Landfill** – Areas of open and closed municipal and non-municipal landfills.

**LUST (Leaking Underground Storage Tank)** – Potential contaminant source sites associated with leaking underground storage tanks as regulated under RCRA.

**Mines and Quarries** – Mines and quarries permitted through the Idaho Department of Lands.)

**Nitrate Priority Area** – Area where greater than 25% of wells/springs show nitrate values above 5mg/l.

**NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System)** – Sites with NPDES permits. The Clean Water Act requires that any discharge of a pollutant to waters of the United States from a point source must be authorized by an NPDES permit.

**Organic Priority Areas** – These are any areas where greater than 25 % of wells/springs show levels greater than 1% of the primary standard or other health standards.

**Recharge Point** – This includes active, proposed, and possible recharge sites on the Snake River Plain.

**RICRIS** – Site regulated under **Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA)**. RCRA is commonly associated with the cradle to grave management approach for generation, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes.

**SARA Tier II (Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act Tier II Facilities)** – These sites store certain types and amounts of hazardous materials and must be identified under the Community Right to Know Act.

**Toxic Release Inventory (TRI)** – The toxic release inventory list was developed as part of the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know (Community Right to Know) Act passed in 1986. The Community Right to Know Act requires the reporting of any release of a chemical found on the TRI list.

**UST (Underground Storage Tank)** – Potential contaminant source sites associated with underground storage tanks regulated as regulated under RCRA.

**Wastewater Land Applications Sites** – These are areas where the land application of municipal or industrial wastewater is permitted by DEQ.

**Wellheads** – These are drinking water well locations regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. They are not treated as potential contaminant sources.

**NOTE:** Many of the potential contaminant sources were located using a geocoding program where mailing addresses are used to locate a facility. Field verification of potential contaminant sources is an important element of an enhanced inventory.

Where possible, a list of potential contaminant sites unable to be located with geocoding will be provided to water systems to determine if the potential contaminant sources are located within the source water assessment area.